

SOLOMONS

P.J. - Sunoco. Tuesday, Oct. 20, 1942.

Tonight's late Navy bulletin has this to say about the struggle for the Solomons: "Large numbers of enemy warships and auxiliaries were still reported in the Solomons area, and there have been no further ^{enemy} landings on Guadalcanal." And then the Navy communique goes on to say that there are no reports of any Jap offensive launched by the enemy troops that were put ashore on Guadalcanal last week. In other words no more have landed, and the ones that did ~~not~~ land are not attacking. But, on the other hand, heavy Jap naval forces are in the waters around the Solomons.

Such hostilities, as are revealed by tonight's navy bulletin are up on high -- air actions. Army, Navy and Marine Corps planes have staged a two day bombardment against the Japs on Guadalcanal Island. This makes it clear that our air base there is still in operation -- ~~this~~ in spite of Jap air bombing and shelling by naval guns. Tonight's Navy statement makes

no mention of any further bomb and shell attacks on the all important air base.

All of which follows a statement today by Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox. He warns^{that} the Japs have not yet launched their Sunday punch. The Secretary put it in these words:- "They have by no means as yet exercised their maximum force." And he added this description of the state of affairs in Guadalcanal. "There's still a good, stiff hard, fight," said he.

All of which gives us only a cryptic impression of the battle for the Solomons -- only an obscure notion of what is going on. Enemy sources claim that a giant conflict is raging. This is stated by the Rome radio, which possibly picked up word from the Jap wireless. This^e Axis version is that the Guadalcanal area is right now the theater of what is called :- "the greatest battle ever fought in the Pacific."

MIDDLE EAST

Mediterranean news tonight tells of sweeping United Nations air action over wide spaces of that ancient sea. In north Africa, American bombers, based on Egypt, blasted the Nazis at Tobruk, while Australian flyers set up a big explosion in a concentration of two hundred Axis vehicles of war.

At Malta, enemy planes continued their raiding, but met with sharp defeat today. British fighter planes put up such stiff resistance that Axis bombers dropped their high explosives in the sea - and turned and ran.

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However, The most striking bit of Mediterranean air action occurred over Crete, where Royal Air Force fighters spotted a German fleet of transport planes with gliders in tow. R.A.F. planes went diving in, and shot down one transport towing gliders - and damaged others.

RUSSIA

The news from Russia is largely weather news tonight, reports of meteorological conditions ~~in~~ at Stalingrad. The Russian winter is rapidly closing down, with temperatures dropping sharply in the area of the great, but now ruined, industrial center on the Volga. Cold rains and frigid winds are sweeping over the open Steppes. This as a prelude to the blinding blizzards and sub-zero temperatures that are the normal mid-winter conditions at Stalingrad.

Moscow reports that the bad weather of approaching winter is restricting the siege operations of the Nazis. For example, the German Air Corps is grounded to a large extent, and the defenders of Stalingrad are free of the incessant dive bomb attacks that they have endured for so long. the Moscow opinion suggests that the fate of the city may depend upon the question of - supplies across the Volga. Hitherto,

the Red Army has been able to provision and munition the city defenders by ferrying tons and tons of supplies across the great broad river. Soviet marines do it in armored cutters and small boats. ^{In these} ~~and~~ they have to run ^a ~~the~~ gauntlet of ~~the~~ Nazi bombs and artillery fire. The Germans have cannon on the banks of the Volga and keep blasting at the across-the-river supply route.

^{TP} The Soviet marines do their work mostly at night - to elude bombs and shells. In their small fast boats they navigate in the pitch darkness, picking their way through the most treacherous kind of water ^{---sneaking} ~~-~~ [^] [^] between sandbars and the sunken hulks of vessels destroyed in the course of battle. Some cutters are said to have made as much as thirty trips across the river in a single night, but the average is about eight.

Such is the supply system that has enabled Stalingrad to make its monumental resistance. But

winter will bring ice to the Volga, and the question is -- how effectively will the night supply system be able to operate? That depends upon the depth of the ice.

HESS

Soviet Russia is agitating its demand that Nazi war criminals, who are prisoners of the British, shall be put on trial at once - instead of waiting until after the war when all Germans guilty of the Nazi atrocities are to be punished. And, of course, the Russians continue to point the finger of accusation at Hess. Today, at Moscow the Communist newspaper PRAVDA, renewed the demand that Hitler's former Chief Lieutenant be put on trial immediately, PRAVDA characterizing Hess as "a bloody Hitlerite war criminal."

In London, meanwhile, there was an official declaration on the status of Hess - who landed in Scotland via plane on some mission or other supposedly. Is he a prisoner of war? Or is he regarded as some kind of emissary?

Today's exposition was given by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary for the Foreign Office,

and his declaration drew a sharp and rather withering

retort. He stated the status of Hess was that of a

— and not an envoy —;
war prisoner, and ^{he} added that the one-time Nazi big shot
was receiving what he called - "appropriate treatment."

"In chains?" demanded a Labor M.P.

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary did not reply
to that jibe, which was a pointed reminder ^{of} ~~on~~ the
shackling of prisoners by the Nazis and the British.

SUBMARINES

Over in London, the British Admiralty rarely gives out any precise facts about the fight against enemy submarines, and that adds to the impressiveness of a statement made today by First Lord of the Admiralty, A.V. Alexander. He gave a figure - the number of Axis undersea craft sunk or damaged. And ^{its a} ~~so~~ large a figure - five hundred and thirty since the beginning of the war. ^{TR} Marked on the record are that many successful attacks in which enemy submarines were either damaged or sunk. And the figure is not complete for all the United Nations. It does not include U-boats destroyed by the Russians - and they say they have sunk quite a few. Nor does it take account of subs that were sunk by the French - before the fall of France. ^{And} It includes part of the anti-submarine successes achieved by the Americans - but, not all.

{ London comment is, that the Germans right now

have no more than a hundred submarines operating at any one time in the North and South Atlantic. The total Nazi undersea fleet is reckoned at about three hundred and fifty. There is no accurate figure for the production rate - guesses ranging from ten to fifty a month. The best opinion is that ten is closer to the total than fifty. These figures, as a background, add to the impressiveness of the record - five hundred and thirty enemy submarines sunk or damaged.

Nevertheless, London's First Lord of the Admiralty warned that the German submarine campaign is still the greatest problem that faces the United Nations. And on this question, he added, depends the whole business of a second front.

MRS. ROOSEVELT

The British are preparing a great welcome for the First Lady of our Land. Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt is to pay an unofficial visit as a guest of Queen Elizabeth, ^{and} London newspapers are hailing the forthcoming event. One paper calls the First Lady - "America's favorite aunt." And it waxes ^{lyrical} ~~illegal~~ in telling how she will arrive - "to stay a while," says the London daily, "and then depart, leaving happiness behind."

We are told that the poor of London's East End slums, so hard hit by bombs, are eager to have Mrs. Roosevelt visit them. They want to tell her their complaints - and these, apparently, are not about the bombing. The women of the East End want to protest ~~x~~ to the American First Lady, because American soldiers get so much more pay than British soldiers. ~~American soldiers go around in London sufficiently, for the~~

~~differente in pay to be noticed - xxxxxxxx~~ when visiting
pubs, ~~for example~~. The East End women ~~would explain to~~
~~Mrs. Roosevelt that they~~ do not begrude the Americans
their extra cash, but they would like to ~~xxx~~ see their
own boys get the same wages. ^{It} So I suppose their appeal
would be - would the American First Lady please see
that the London Government raises the pay of British
soldiers, and give them as much as the Americans get.
And that certainly would be a delicate point for the
President's wife to negotiate. Willkie, in his round-
the-world mission, never found anything needing more
tact than that.

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DRAFT

Here is a ~~definitive~~ statement that older men in the army, some of them at least, ^{may} ~~will~~ be released from military duty to work in war industries. This applies to such of the older men as would be useful in armament plants. They would not be dismissed from the Army - they would be furloughed, granted leave, time out to work at war production.

This word emanates from the President himself. At the White House news conference today, he made the remark that on his recent tour of the country, he saw in army camps men ranging from thirty-five to forty-five years of age, men who, he reasoned, would have been much better off in ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ war factories instead of in the Army.

He was asked - Would he make a definite statement whether these older men would be furloughed? There is a growing labor shortage in war production -

so would they be let out to help in meeting the demand for workers?

The President replied that he imagined that some of the older men who had the background and training for production work, would be furloughed back into civilian life.

NORRIS

President Roosevelt today came out for a candidate, and gave his endorsement to a Senator running for re-election. It should not be hard to guess who -- Norris of Nebraska, the famous Uncle George. He is running for reelection as an Independent, and is opposed by a Republican and a Democrat. The President is head of the Democratic Party, but it is different so far as Nebraska is concerned.

TAX

Congress today completed action on the biggest tax bill in history. Never before has a single measure of taxation totalled so large a figure -- nine billion, six hundred million dollars. Today, the House of Representatives passed the gigantic war measure by a vote of a hundred and thirty to two, and sent it to the Senate. The Upper House promptly gave its own okay -- and the bill was sent to the White House for the signature of the President.

The latest is, President Roosevelt says he will sign the record-breaking tax bill tomorrow.

CRIME

England today reports another Sherlock Holmes mystery - the second recently. ~~Last night I told~~
^{me}~~about~~ a perplexing murder on Baker Street, in an apartment a few doors from the house in which Sherlock Holmes is described as having lived, and where he explained his deductions to the wide-eyed Dr. Watson. This Baker Street puzzler has what it takes - the victim having lived a double life, a man with a scarred face being sought by Scotland Yard.

Today's affair is different - even more weird. In southern England, Lance Corporal Harry Hudson of the Grenadier Guards, went to a hut where soldiers of that famous regiment were housed. As he opened the door, he fell dead. He was electrocuted when he touched the doorknob. This, it was found, had been wired and charged with a deadly current. ^{It} At first they thought it might have been a prank, clumsily carried too far,

but investigation disclosed that the wiring job was so expertly done, the doorknob so skillfully electrified, that it could only have been a deliberate scheme to kill. The Scotland Yard men are looking for somebody who had a grudge against Lance Corporal ~~XXXXXX~~ Hudson of the Grenadier Guards, somebody who knew about his going to that door, and contrived murder.